

***ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION***

Communication apparatus having interfaces for exchanging data with first and second neighbors, a memory for storing codec information regarding the communication apparatus and a control entity operative to detect a message from the first neighbor, the first message being indicative of codec information regarding an originating entity. In response, the control entity assesses compatibility between the codec information regarding the originating entity and the codec information regarding the communication apparatus. If the assessment is positive, the control entity self-identifies the communication apparatus as a candidate for terminally supporting a subsequent codec-bypass negotiation with the originating entity. If the assessment is negative, the control entity self-identifies the communication apparatus as a candidate for non-terminally supporting such negotiation. The invention thus capitalizes on the realization that although an end-to-end codec-bypass connection may not be possible, it may nevertheless be possible to achieve bandwidth savings by establishing a codec-bypass connection along only a portion of the path.